



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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COMMERCIAL FISHERIES PROVIDE EMPLOYMENT FOR MORE THAN HALF MILLION

According to the Fish and Wildlife Service Fishery Leaflet 393 just released by the Department of the Interior:

In 1956 approximately 150,000 commercial fishermen, working with approximately 90,000 boats of various sizes, produced 5,200,000,000 pounds of fish which was valued (before expenses were deducted) at ---

\$363,000,000 at the boatside (\$335,800,000 in 1955);
\$612,000,000 at the processor level (\$556,000,000);
\$865,000,000 to the wholesaler (\$800,000,000) and,
\$1,128,000,000 to the retailer (\$1,043,000,000).

In addition the commercial fishing industry was responsible for ---

The employment of an estimated 300,000 workers in allied industry such as gear manufacture, making processing machinery and boat construction;

The employment of 101,000 shore workers in 4,024 shore establishments including processing plants and some wholesale units but not retailers;

The employment of 3,300 workers using 1,350 boats to transport fish from area of capture to handling and processing plants.

The consuming public's response to this activity was to eat an average of 10.1 pounds (edible weight) of fish per person during the year; of this 5.7 pounds were fresh and frozen fish, 3.8 pounds were the canned product and .6 of a pound was cured. In 1955 the consumption was 10.2 per capita.

Fishery Leaflet 393 also points out that it would take \$11,781,350,000 invested at four percent interest to maintain earnings comparable with the net earnings of the fishing industry in 1956.

While the total 1956 catch set an all-time record, the record-shattering portion of it was in industrial fish, with menhaden production setting the pace. The industrial catch, which is largely converted into oil and meal, totaled 2,400,000,000 pounds, 300,000,000 pounds above the previous record set in 1955.

The catch of edible fish was 2,800,000,000 pounds which is considerably below the record 3,371,000,000 harvested in 1950. The total value of the catch, including both industrial and food fish, was \$363,000,000 or \$4,000,000 below the high mark set in 1948.

The per pound average price of the catch dropped below the seven cent mark for the first time since 1945. The 1956 average was 6.98 cents per pound compared with the record of 8.17 cents in 1951. This decline is due largely to the big industrial catch which comprised a greater portion of the catch than ever before.

The leading fish in pounds produced in 1956 with 1955 figures in parentheses were: menhaden (industrial fish)--2,067,286,000 (1,867,783,000); salmon--311,000,000 (289,880,000); tuna--327,179,000 (269,499,000); sea herring--243,472,000 (163,632,000); shrimp--220,000,000 (244,335,000); haddock--151,882,000 (135,035,000), and Atlantic Ocean perch--151,058,000 (156,989,000).

San Pedro, California, retained its leadership as a landing port with 382,924,000 pounds of principally tuna, Pacific sardines and mackerel landed. Lewes, Delaware, was second with 354,095,000 pounds, all of which was menhaden. Gloucester, Mass., was third with 250,068,000 pounds of ocean perch, whiting and menhaden. Then came Beaufort-Morehead City, N. C., with 202,335,000 pounds of shrimp, spot and menhaden. San Pedro landings led the field in value with \$29,000,000. San Diego was next with \$18,778,000 and New Bedford, Mass., third with \$12,337,000. The value of the catch landed at Lewes, Beaufort-Morehead City, Reedville, Virginia, and Cameron and Empire, Louisiana, was not available.

The canned pack for 1956 was 12 percent above that of 1955, due primarily to increases in tuna, Alaska salmon, Maine sardines and Pacific Coast mackerel. The tuna pack of 230,000,000 pounds set a new record, beating the mark set in 1955 by 33,000,000 pounds. There was an increase in the amount of crabmeat canned but a decline in the canning of oysters.

There were 533 establishments engaged in canning fish and byproducts. The Pacific Coast led with 147 plants; Alaska was second with 104; the South Atlantic and Gulf were third with 100; New England next with 74; then the Middle Atlantic States with 50, the Chesapeake Bay area with 33, and the Lake States with 22. Puerto Rico, Hawaii and American Samoa each had one.

Fishery Leaflet 393 while still considered a preliminary review, is the statistical story of the commercial fishery activities in 1956. It also contains data by States on the quantity and value of the 1955 catch and considerable data on imports and exports and world fisheries. It is available through the Division of Information, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of the Interior, Washington 25, D. C.

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